686

THE SCHOLAR

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CONTENTS

1. Life
By Nicholas Roerich 449

2. A Dewan's Economics
By Prof. K. S. Srikantan 451

3. A Good Master
By R. Ramakrishnan, M.A., L.T. 457

4. The Modern Short Story
By C. S. Bagi, M.A., B.T. 460

5. Legend of Vitasoka
By Ranga Rao Nippani 463

6. Sati Ranak Devi
By Prof. V. Rangacharya, M.A. 467

7. Nicholas Roerich
By Barnett D. Conlan 471

8. Elephant capture in Kheddas
By S. R. 480

9. The Pigmy Land
By Jehangir R. P. Mody 483

10. The Conqueror
By The Rev. F. H. Aldhouse 484

11. Book Reviews. 487

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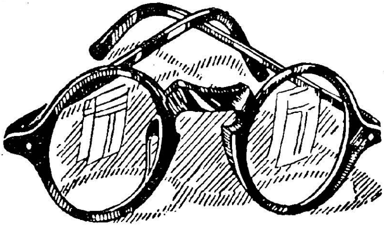

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SCHOLAR ANNUAL, 1939

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With September, THE SCHOLAR completes the fourteenth year of its existence and, in accordance with our practice in previous years, the first number of the new volume will be an extraordinary number.

It will contain a larger number of features than usual, and numerous pictures, views, stories, poems and contributions in lighter vein.

The 1939 Annual will be a star number and provide a favourable and suitable opportunity for advertisers who, it is hoped, will patronise it in large numbers.

A single copy will cost annas twelve, but those who register their names in advance will get a concession of annas two a copy. This concession will be allowed till October 25. As usual, subscribers will get their Annual Copy free as also new subscribers who begin their period from the Annual, i. e. from October 1939.

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The Scholar

JULY 1939

Vol. XIV. *No. 10.*

Life*

By NICHOLAS ROERICH

I. Sowing.

CAN anyone foresee which sapling will thrive best in the forest and which will be the first to perish ? And so with sowing, who can say which will prove to be the best field, when so many factors have to be taken into consideration ?

The most experienced gardener cannot always say which tree will produce the finest blossom. A good sower will not complain because he does not always see the result of his work. And so, in matters of culture, it is impossible to say when the sturdiest shoots will appear. Nor can we predict to what extent alteration or dissolution can engender fresh offshoots. I remember that A. A. Golmishev & Kutuzov told us that he did not desire to see his collection housed in a museum. " Let it be dispersed, provided it give new collectors the same pleasure as it gave to me. "

He was not only a lover of art who spoke in this way but a poet. He knew the joys of collecting and loved to be creative. He knew that such joy is particularly vivid when it concerns private collections rather than museums. For them it is a matter of real admiration and the creative faculty. Like a poet he felt that every creation has its own destiny. Some are destined to take root in one spot for a long time, others to go touring the world like travellers, giving joy in unexpected places.

We cannot say which joy is the greater nor can we predict where a work of art will have its greatest influence. It may be that the youthful heart will derive its highest inspiration from home, where the routine of life is often lit up with the beauty of real art. Everyone knows how frequently failure has engendered an effort to greater things. It has been said : " There is no

* From the book " LIFE " (in preparation).

fortune to which misfortune has not contributed." We have seen in what unexpected ways fresh creatures can arise. All is in movement. This constant movement which transcends human reason gives rise to new tensions which sharpen our forces and bring about a spirit of creativeness. People do not know what wanderings are in store for them nor can they foresee the roads of the future. Let everything go forward towards new conception.

II. Work in Common.

While an exhibition of my paintings was being held at the Kansas City Museum, a certain Mrs. Holmes had the charming idea of presenting my picture 'Lord of the Night' to the museum, in the name of the children. The plan was adopted and the children responded, since children always like to be given the more serious work of adults.

Appeals were made through the papers, children's parades held, and, on the whole, the scheme proved successful.

It is always a great joy to me to see youth participating in such movements, especially when, as in this instance, they were not forced to do so.

On the contrary, once the idea had been given, children of all ages responded to it spontaneously. There are quite a number of such co-operative movements going on in the world, and the more the better, for we cannot sufficiently attract youth to the idea of working towards a common construction. And, in the last resort, for whom is everything being built? For future generations, for youth itself. If youth be taught to co-operate all over the world, this will make a link with the future. Much has been said about the difference and the misunderstandings which separate the members of different generations.

Senility, however, does not depend upon the generation one belongs to, since there are aged people who are young in spirit, and youngsters who are often quite senile.

The question is not one of age but of thinking processes. The more a person is attracted to work in common, from his early years, the more will he be accustomed to think of the common welfare and to retain a spirit of youth.

Today there are widespread movements in which whole populations show a tendency to collaborate in the direction of public work, and people should not only be admitted to such tasks but should be made to feel that they are collaborators. This sense of collaboration and responsibility will tend to engender a healthy strain of thought, and enable people to discover and rejoice in all that is beautiful.

Encourage co-operation.

A Dewan's Economics

By Prof. K. S. SRIKANTAN

SIR Mirza Ismail, the talented Dewan of Mysore, is perhaps the only statesman in India to-day who is putting into practice the teachings of the theoretical economists. Long before the Congress appointed the Industrial Planning Committee, he had the foresight to realise that the hope of Mysore rested on a planned scheme of industrialisation. He observed in the course of a radio talk in Madras: "The ideal for all Mysoreans is that they should wash themselves with Mysore soap, dry themselves with Mysore towels, clothe themselves with Mysore silks, ride Mysore horses, eat the abundant Mysore food, drink Mysore coffee with Mysore sugar, build their homes with Mysore cement, Mysore timber and Mysore steel, furnish their houses with Mysore furniture and write their letters on Mysore paper". These words of Sir Mirza explain his economics better than any description that one could give.

It is not known to many that the state of Mysore has been pursuing a planned economic policy for the past ten years. In fact, if to the Congress goes the credit of creating a Committee on industrial planning, to the Mysore Government goes the greater credit of launching a scheme of planned economic organisation long before the Congress thought of accepting office. Sir Mirza Ismail, the Dewan of Mysore did not stop to consider the feasibility of a planned economic organisation, but straightway started his programme of planned economic uplift, and if to-day Mysore leads British India, it is because the seeds of planned economy were sown as early as 1928. The motive of the Dewan apparently is more to release the dynamic of general progress rather than attain any particular state of well-being, however high.

Mysore, like British India, has agriculture as its main occupation. It has 17,000 villages and the representative Mysorean is still a villager. The Dewan wants before long to place before the subjects of the State a programme of work, with the various parts and stages of it clearly conceived in themselves, in their inter-relation and in their ultimate cumulative effect on the national economy. It must be calculated to capture the people by the ideals it puts forward before itself. It must be capable of enlisting their active support by impressing the popular mind with its essential practicability. The programme is so conceived that at every stage there are visible signs of success. In short, planning in Mysore is

not a hotchpotch of desperate tasks, but is a unified one, which, as time goes on, becomes progressively easier to accomplish.* Planning in Mysore included agricultural improvement and industrial development — the aim of both being to raise the standard of life of the ryot. The lot of the villager has always been the main concern of the State. As early as 1931, the Dewan said, "It remains with me an article of faith that the main duty of Government must lie in the amelioration of the lot of the ryot and the improvement of village life. More and better education, better sanitary and medical facilities, expansion of rural communications and irrigational works--these are some of the conveniences which every ryot should enjoy." The pressure of population in relation to food-supply has shown in Mysore, as elsewhere, that the development of agricultural production should be the corner-stone of policies designed to make available to the masses not only adequate supplies of the means of subsistence, but also the means by which they could command sufficient purchasing power for goods which they need to raise the standard of living in other directions. The State has been doing all that is possible to improve agriculture. It is well known that, if agriculture is the foundation of Indian rural economy, irrigation is the backbone of agriculture. Here again the State has been pursuing a very carefully planned policy of expansion. In 1938, the following works were completed. 1. The Anjanapur reservoir at a cost of Rs. 18 lakhs. It brought under cultivation an area of 4000 acres. 2. The Nidasale and Kama Samudram tank-works. 3. An outlay of Rs. 1,16,000 was incurred on repairing certain other sources of irrigation.

A large number of important works have been sanctioned and an equally large number of projects is also under consideration. In its anxiety to extend canal irrigation, the State has not neglected the work of restoring old tanks. There are to-day as many as 25,000 tanks, out of which 2,500 are classed as major tanks. Tank-restoration committees have been appointed to see to the restoration and proper working of all these tanks. Again, for drinking-water wells, a five-year programme had been sanctioned and every year a sum of 3 lakhs is being made available for providing wells. In short, in the planned economy of Mysore, no factor touching the welfare of the villager is neglected.

The Department of Agriculture in Mysore deserves to be congratulated on the excellent plan of work it is pursuing for improving the lot of the agriculturist. A special feature of the work of this department during the year was the opening of demonstration plots in the ryots' own fields in which demonstrations

* Indian Finance,

were conducted in close co-operation with the owners and as part of the regular operations; 1000 such plots in 500 villages have been formed to deal with all aspects of agricultural improvement and particularly with the advantages of using improved implements and selected seed and manuring in a systematic manner. The Chemical Section of the Agricultural Department has succeeded in producing cream jaggery of high quality by a process of decolorization of the juice with active carbon. The Government have sanctioned the installation of a jaggery boiling unit on the Irwin Canal Farm with a working capacity of five tons of cane per day. The department also has succeeded in making use of molasses as a corrective to soil alkalinity, the use of certain indigenous plants as insecticides and good trials have been made in making composts popular among the villagers. Thanks to the propaganda of the department, the villagers in Mysore have taken to some of the newest methods in agricultural operations. In 1938 alone, sprayers and spraying materials to the extent of Rs 40,000 were sold among 1,700 villagers.

It is the desire of the Dewan to make every village a model village. But it is too huge a task to be fiinished in the near future. An encouraging beginning, however, has been made and many of the roadside villages are putting on a far better appearance than before. "On approaching, a village, one comes across a gate-way of elegant stone pillars with the name of the village boldly engraved. A well-constructed path leads to the village. The houses are constructed in a line and are not overcrowded. In every village one comes across the village hall which is a spacious building capable of accommodating the entire population of the village............. Even village parks have been laid out in most of the villages, where in the evening, after the toil of the day, the villager can rest. Proper lighting arrangements are provided." The authorities would do well to give some more details of the village on the name-board, like population, main occupation, subsidiary industries etc. The work of the State in the Closepet Rural Welfare Centre is worthy of being imitated in the Bombay Karnataka. This Centre was established with a view to securing special attention to all aspects of rural development. The object of the Centre is to carry out intensive work to improve the existing conditions of rural life and economy. The activities are guided and controlled by a Committee of management consisting of officials and non-officials. In the past two years, this Centre has done remarkable work. Statistical materials have been collected for about 45 villages; 26 villages have been surveyed by the Sanitary Department. Some of these have been taken for intensive work in sanitation, such as opening of drains, removing 'lantana', fixing of windows, and construction of bore-hole

latrines. A triennial programme has been drawn for providing all the villages with drinking-water wells and 11 wells have already been completed. In short, the work done in Closepet Centre is the type of planned economy that villages require.

The real problem in Mysore, as in India, is the problem of marketing. The peasant is still at the mercy of either the money-lender or the purchaser. Unless this problem is solved, any amount of agricultural improvement is not going to benefit the peasant. Economic planning itself is " based on the idea of a nice organised balance between production and consumption with the price system as a mediator. And if this balance is allowed to be destroyed in any essential particular the plan as a whole will not work ". Here again the State of Mysore has not been indifferent. In the words of the Devolopment Secretary, " The Government has taken steps to collect the necessary statistics by conducting marketing surveys in regard to certain important agricultural and commercial products, such as copra, paddy, hydes, coffee, tobacco, oil-seeds, eggs, cotton, and also conducted experiments like cold storage of fruits like apples, mangoes etc. The work was conducted by the Departmental Officers in collaboration with the marketing officers of the Government of India, with a view to finding out what marketing facilities were available for those commodities and how the same could be developed. It was the policy of the Government to undertake such service in respect of every important industry as and when the occasion for it arose and obtain necessary statistics and reports from experts."

Mysore, however, stands fore-most in her policy of industrial development. To the Dewan of Mysore the hope of Mysore lies in a thorough-going industrialisation. The present time is very opportune for developing industries in Mysore. For it has been found in Mysore, as elsewhere, that one of the most important causes of unemployment is the progressive economic deterioration due to the increased pressure of population on the soil. And the only way to remedy this is rapid industrialisation. Mysore possesses all the advantages necessary for industrialisation. Her raw materials, mineral wealth and water facilities are too well-known. Not to make use of them would only indicate lack of foresight. The State has been pursuing a very systematic policy of industrialisation.

The oldest and largest industrial undertaking of the State is the Mysore Iron Works at Bhadravati. It was started in 1923 and for a period of 13 years it had to struggle for existence. But to-day it has begun to justify the anticipations of the originators. The Government, after careful consideration, installed a steel plant at a cost of over 22 lakhs in 1936. The Iron Works are

giving to-day appreciable profits. The Sandalwood Oil Factory is another important industrial undertaking of the State. The Mysore distillation plays an important part in meeting the world's demand for sandalwood-oil. Again, "The history of Mysore Soap Factory is a veritable commercial romance started on a small scale in 1918. The Soap Factory has grown into large proportions and has proved a first class commercial project." It yields an yearly profit of more than one lakh of rupees. The Silk industry in Mysore is making its way in spite of the Chinese and the Japanese competition. The Silk Factory and its branches have given employment to two lakhs of persons and the annual production of silk comes to 1·5 million pounds. The faith of the Dewan in industrial planning is clear from the fact that to utilise the silk-waste a Silk-waste Spinning Factory was set up recently in Bangalore, having a capacity of producing 80,000 lbs. of spun yarn a year. The Mysore Silk Factory produces georgettes, crepe, satin etc. The Industrial and Testing Laboratory, known as the Mysore Medical Products, produces pharmaceutical articles of high quality which are in demand all over India. More than 58,000 lbs. of medicine are taken by the Government Medical Stores. In the Bitumen Section more than 150,000 gallons of bitumen are manufactured to meet the requirements of local bodies and Public Works Department. The manufacture of cement has been started in Bhadravati, for it is eminently suited to it. In short, almost every year a new industry is being started with the definite aim of enriching the State and benefitting the subjects. The success of the recently started Mandya Sugar Factory is too well-known to need any elaboration here.

This policy of industrialisation has not been at the cost of cottage industries. Their place in Mysore rural economy is well recognised Very recently loans to the extent of Rs. 43,000 were sanctioned by the department to 42 persons for running efficiently their own cottage industries. A detailed survey of the existing conditions has been carried on in about 120 villages, and a plan of future work is likely to be given by the department. The Khadi Centre at Badanval had a sale going up to Rs. 65,000 in 1938. Among the rural industries already introduced and established on improved lines, mention may be made of the following:- 1. Manufacture of agricultural and other implements of daily use. 2. Coir industry. 3. Rope making. 4. Lacquerware, and wooden toys. 5. Reed mat making. 6. Tanning and curing of hides and skins. 7. Manufacture of glue. 8. Manufacture of handmade paper.

Any discussion on Economic Planning in Mysore could not omit a reference to the building activities of the State. Mysore and Bangalore, not to speak of the many district and taluk

headquarters, have become hives of good buildings. This policy of the Dewan has created some opposition, for, many in Mysore think that this is a waste. But the promotion of sustained building activity over all parts of the country is desirable, whether we view our economic problem as one of providing livelihood for the masses or as one of stimulating the growth and expansion of our staple industries. It is only too obvious that if we can find ways and means of initiating a broad-based building movement in India, the demand that such a movement will set up for the products of the cement industry, the iron and steel industry and a number of trades, professions and callings will be sufficient not only to absorb the full capacity of these industries as it is to-day but also to bring about a rapid expansion.*

Enough has been said in the foregoing paragraphs to show that the Dewan of Mysore has been successfully pursuing a planned economic programme for the past ten years. The example of Mysore is enough to clear the doubts of those who question the possibility of Economic Planning in India. The secret of Mysore's success has been that from the start it never pitched its ambition too high and her position to-day is a result of a very carefully-constructed programme. The Dewan is, indeed, a statesman among economists and an economist among statesmen.

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* Indian Finance.

A Good Master

By R. RAMAKRISHNAN, M. A., L. T.

SRI Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, familiarly known as the Prophet of Dakshineswar, was not educated in the accepted sense of the word. He had not much of schooling, and he never entered a university. But yet if education, as Swami Vivekananda has defined it, is the manifestation of the perfection already in man, no one perhaps in the long history of humanity has been more educated than Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna did not read books, but he drank deep at the fountain of knowledge, and so, though he had not read widely, he was highly educated. It is the function of an educated person to impart his wisdom to others. In other words, an educated person must also be a teacher. Our scriptures enjoin on us the two-fold duty of learning and teaching, *adhyayana* and *adhyapana*. But if only a few on earth can be called truly educated, fewer still can be styled true teachers. Sri Ramakrishna was both a highly educated person and an ideal teacher.

Here is an incident in his life which shows what an able teacher he was.

Sri Ramakrishna had a disciple called Niranjan. One day when Niranjan was going to Dakshineswar in a boat, a few persons in the boat began to abuse Sri Ramakrishna. Niranjan protested against this, but as the abuse of his master did not cease, he wanted to teach the men a lesson. He rocked the boat violently, thundering out that he would drown them all for their ill-mannered behaviour. Niranjan had a robust frame and the men were afraid and apologised for their mistake. When Sri Ramakrishna heard of the incident, he rebuked Niranjan for his violent temper. "Anger is a deadly sin, and why should you be subject to it? Foolish people say all sorts of things. You should ignore them completely as beneath your notice. If, instead, you fight with them, you will have to spend all your life doing that. Just fancy what harm you were about to do in the heat of the moment!"—this was Sri Ramakrishna's advise to Niranjan.

Jogin was another disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. One day he was sailing on the river towards Dakshineswar. One of the passengers in the boat vilified Sri Ramakrishna. Jogin was sorry, and wanted to speak in defence of his Master, but thinking that the man spoke as he did in utter ignorance, he kept quiet.

Sri Ramakrishna came to know of the incident and told Jogin, "The man abused me, and you pocketed the insult without a murmur! Do you know what the scriptures advise in such a case? One should either kill the vilifier or leave the place at once. And you bore it tamely."

It will be noticed that both Niranjan and Jogin found themselves in identical situations, but behaved differently, and Sri Ramakrishna criticised both. Sri Ramakrishna's condemnation of the behaviour of both needs explanation.

The explanation is here. Niranjan was "of a violent temper and often resorted to drastic measures for the righting of wrongs." Jogin had an "extreme softness of heart and was gentle to a fault." As the *Life of Sri Ramakrishna* puts it, "it was Sri Ramakrishna's idea to lead the boys in his charge to perfect harmony, of which his own life was a brilliant example. So we find him putting mettle into the one and toning down the fiery nature of the other. The prescriptions in both cases were suited to the nature of the disease."

This action of Sri Ramakrishna—of varying his instruction in accordance with the temperament of the pupils—is in consonance with sound educational principles. Unfortunately, however, our present system of education lays more stress on the class rather than on the individual, and the tree is always lost in the wood.

The ancient *gurukula* system did not suffer from this imperfection. In the old days, the pupils and master lived together, sharing the daily joys and sorrows, eating together and labouring together. Every one knew every one else, and there was a harmonious adjustment in the relations of those who formed the school, and an all-round progress was ensured. What do we find to-day? Teachers do not even know the names of all the pupils they teach. Sometimes pupils are referred to by numbers! Period after period the bell rings and ushers in a teacher who pours out some unintelligible, and, if intelligible, uninteresting, and, if interesting, "un-significant" stuff, and departs, leaving no foot-prints behind. Surely this is no education; it may at best be examination-coaching, and nothing more.

Sri Ramakrishna was a teacher of *pava-vidya*, while our schools feebly aim at partial *apa a-vidya* only. Still we can profit by the method of Sri Ramakrishna described above. Teaching of the true variety can never be a mass affair. If it were so, our schools can very well dispense with the numerous teachers on

the staff, and carry on with a few radio-sets and broadcasting instruments. Teaching is a process between soul and soul. And he alone is a true teacher who takes pains to understand his pupils aright and thoroughly, and adjusts his methods to suit the differing mentality of the pupils, so that each student can proceed along the line of least resistance.

It is not enough that a teacher is proficient in the particular branch of his learning; it is very necessary that he is an able judge of human personality also.

Sri Ramakrishna was a good Master, because not only was he thorough in the subject-matter of his knowledge, but he had also the eye to see what among the numerous paths was the most suited to a particular individual.

The Modern Short Story

By C. S. BAGI, M. A., B. T.

THE short story traces its ancestry back to the beginning of the historic times. Fables, Fairy-tales and Folk-tales are the earliest examples of it. Story-telling as a form of entertainment and a method of moral instruction is an ancient practice. As a form of conscious art, however, conceived and developed according to well-understood principles, the short story is a thing of yesterday. There is all the difference in the world between Kipling's "Plain Tales from the Hills" (1888) and the amorphous legends of Robin Hood and Maid Marian. Legends and myths of the past have come down to us through unnumbered repetitions of un-numbered generations. They cannot be dated. They are the common property of entire tribes and do not bear the mark of individual genius. Sometimes, as in the case of the biblical stories of Ruth, the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan, we are surprised by the high degree of their technical perfection. Each of the gospel parables is a work of consummate skill. The method employed represents the shortest distance from start to finish. A single purpose informs it and is carried out with a rigorous economy of means. Yet, the parables are not products of conscious art; nor can they be said to be personal in the sense in which we call Maupassant's stories personal. All ancient story-material has been sifted and winnowed in its passage through centuries. Its technical perfection (when there is any) is the result of an automatic process similar to the filtration of liquids. As a shapeless piece of stone loses its sharp edges and assumes a perfectly rounded shape in the course of its prolonged friction with other stones on the sea beach, the formless stories of the past have in certain cases dropped all inartistic details during their repeated narration and have reached us in a highly refined condition. These stories reflect the thought of a whole community and a whole age. They have, therefore, a historical significance and are of inestimable value as store-houses of ancient wisdom.

The modern short story is to the ancient folk-tales what a neatly cultivated garden-rose is to a way-side flower. One is a product of natural growth and the other of conscious industry. Each may be good in its own way and the question of comparative excellence does not arise. We do not love a flower the less because it is not grown according to the latest theories of botany.

The point to remember is that each represents a variety different from the other.

Short stories are a regular feature of modern periodical literature. And as this literature constitutes a bewilderingly vast bulk to-day, stories are being written off on the basis of mass production. We also hear of schools which undertake to teach story-writing the same as schools of Engineering and Technology. The situation might well have become comical if it were not for the danger that stories of cheap sensation are very often offered to the public as genuine stuff. Many writers—thanks to Freud and his tribe—flavour their yarns with artificial appeal by being needlessly frank about sex. Three-fourths of modern journalism miscalled literature is provokingly indecent, the short story being no exception to the rule.

The short story is a different type of prose fiction from the novel to which it bears a superficial resemblance. The difference goes deeper than the bare magnitude of the written matter. The length of the short story varies infinitely within the prescribed limits of the magazine in which it appears. But its size is immaterial. Essentially the short story is like miniature painting-an art which aims at presenting a stray episode of life so as to suggest to us the wonder of its conception in the author's mind. In method it aims at producing the maximum effect with the minimum means. It is marked by a careful handling of the story-material and shows a nicer discrimination in the selection of details than a novelist needs to bother about. Beyond a rough and general idea of plot and character, few novelists care to know how their stories will proceed in actual writing. Readers will recollect the amusing case of Sir Walter Scott. Scott's stories grew into all sorts of wonderful shapes, but rarely permitted him to see far ahead of the situation he was actually describing at any time. And Thackeray's characters, once they got started on their careers, became their own masters, independent of their creator's will. The short story writer, however, is less free to alter and amend his preconceived plan at every stage along its development. In the process of narration, too many alterations of the original plan are likely to affect the unity of impression which is the key-note of the short story teller's art. Poe has summarised the practice of story writing as follows: "He (the writer) combines such events as may best aid him in establishing a preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the out-bringing of this effect, he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one pre-established design." Rigorous as Poe's criterion is, it emphasises an essential

aspect of the short story : its singleness of purpose. Of course it is needless to add that very few stories reach Poe's ideal of narrative excellence. Nor need we grudge appreciation to a story in which defects of construction are adequately forestalled by the compensatory merits of humour, pathos, style, characterisation, etc.

A very striking feature of modern short stories is their bewildering variety. Classification of them is bound to be inadequate or inexact. R. L. Stevenson's three-fold division of stories based on the predominance of one or the other of three cardinal story-elements (character, plot and atmosphere) is not exact, nor perhaps intended to be. It is a sorry comment on Stevenson's classification that stories which fit into it are a negligible minority, and several of them hardly deserve the name.

But inadequate as Stevenson's classification is, it has one undeniable merit. It sums up the impulses and motives which, from beginning to end, dominate the mind of the story teller. The classification is useful when considered as a way of tracing the process of a story's formation in the author's mind rather than as a method of cataloguing finished stories under descriptive labels.

Legend of Vitasoka

(By RANGA RAO NIPPANI)

[The following story is from Eugene Burnouf's "L' Introduction a 1' Historie du Buddhisme Indien," a work based on Sanskrit manuscripts of the Paris Asiatic Society : presented by Mr. Brian Houghton Hodgson, who was a resident in Nepal from 1820—1843. The Legend of Vitasoka illustrates the doctrine of Karma, the inevitability of cause and effect and certain other traits of Asoka's character which are not generally found in ordinary history books.]

HAVING surrendered himself to the will of Gautama, Asoka the Great set up eighty four thousand royal edicts all over the country and maintained three hundred thousand Arhats and disciples who taught the laymen the principal tenets of "Dhamma Chakka Pavattana Sutta." Sramanas travelled far and wide, carrying with them the message of the Buddha till the whole of the Eastern Hemisphere reverberated with the glory of Asoka and countless millions of lips uttered daily the prayer, "I take refuge in the Buddha, in the Dhamma and in the Sangha". For 46 years from 268—222 B. C., the Great Monarch lived and worked for the cause of Buddhism. From Japan to Warsaw, from Cape Comorin to the Siberian desert in the recess of the Himalayan snows or in the tropical jungles of Siam are strewn the Chityas and stupas of Emperor Asoka. No wonder even to-day after 20 centuries, in the far eastern corners of the world, the Monasteries jealously gaurd the sacred memories of India and the Bhikkus turn reverentially towards the land of Sakyamuni, the land of mighty Asoka, the paradise of Fa-Hein and Huen-Tsang.

During this period Buddhism spread rapidly and in spite of the spirit of religious toleration advocated and sponsored by Asoka, the pent-up feelings of hatred and jealousy as between the pleasure loving Bhikkus and the astute Brahmins found an outlet in occasional street brawls and skirmishes, which were put down with a firm hand by Asoka, who was as good a statesman as he was a religious propagandist.

Vitasoka, the brother of Asoka. was a great admirer of the Tirthyas (Brhmans). who had convinced him that the way to salvation was by leading an ascetic religious life and that deliverance would not be for those sarmaneras (sectarian ascetics) who led an easy life and were afraid of pain.

This caused Asoka uneasiness. He could not reconcile himself that his own brother should not share his belief on the greatness

of Buddhism. Sending for Vitasoka one day, he advised him that the path of deliverance lay in taking refuge in Buddha. Now Vitasoka was a supersensitive soul. He would not believe in any creed or dogma. His was a relentless quest after truth and beauty. Even Asoka the mighty could not bend the resolute will of Vitasoka. All the same, Vitasoka loved his august brother for his sincerity of purpose. But brotherly affection did not stand in the way of his critical analysis of facts and dogmas. Assuring his brother that he would give his serious consideration to what he said, Vitasoka retired into a forest where he beheld one day a Rishi who was surrounded by five fires and was subjecting himself to severe mortification; a Rishi who had lived in the forest for twelve years depending for his sustenance on herbs and roots and sleeping on a bed of grass.

Vitasoka approached the Rishi and put to him this question: " Is there anything which troubleth thee, O Blessed one, during thy penance ? " "Yes " answered the Rishi, " when I behold the mating of antelopes, then I am consumed by the fever of desire " whereupon, dumbfounded, Vitasoka lifted up his voice to heaven and cried " If the Rishis dwelling in the lonely forest, living on air, on water and roots by such severe austerities practised for so long, be powerless to still their passions, then how may the Sakyas control their senses, they who devour so much meat, who feed on butter, on curds, and rice well seasoned ? "

When Asoka heard this, he contrived a plan by which he thought he could convince his brother that in spite of all the pomp and luxury surrounding one, it was still possible to keep the spirit detached from entanglements. One day, while Asoka was in the bath room, the ministers approached Vitasoka and prevailed upon him to put on the royal garb and the crown and sit upon the throne just to see how the royal insignia would suit him as he was the heir apparent for the throne. While Vitasoka was on the throne, there appeared on the scene Asoka and with feigned anger, he accused his brother of trying to usurp the throne while he was still alive. He called for the executioners and asked them to behead Vitasoka. The ministers at this juncture, as pre-arranged, went down on their knees, and pleaded for mercy. Asoka decided with apparent reluctance to allow his brother to be the emperor for seven days, after which time he would be beheaded. Eight hangmen were instructed to be at the gates of the royal palace and every day in the evening the hangmen approached Vitasoka and told him with the ringing of bells that his span of life was cut down by one day.

Vitasoka lived like a king. There was music, rich food, which emperors only are privileged to taste, beautiful women

surrounded him, there was everything for an individual to feel life worth living. On the seventh day at the appointed hour, Vitasoka was summoned before Asoka who told him sternly that his end was near and that he should be prepared for the final ordeal.

However, Asoka asked his brother, " Vitasoka, what did'st thou think of the singing, the dancing, the concert of things ? "

Vitasoka: "I heard nothing, I beheld nothing. Women, dance, song, the palace with its couches and lounges, fortune, youth, beauty, even earth itself with its varied treasures was empty and joyless for me as long as I beheld the blue garbed executioners seated tranquilly at my gates."

Asoka: "If the fear of that death which is but to deprive thee of only one life can so torment thee as to prevent thee from enjoying pleasant things such as rejoice the heart, what pleasure shall the heart of the religious find in food and other objects of the senses, they who think on the terrors of death repeated through hundreds of existences. How may fine garments, beds, couches, vases attract hearts which are set on deliverance, which behold in such things assasins, for whom the body is as a dwelling on fire and who regard all things as perishable ?

Vitasoka was then convinced of the significance of the samenaras' attitude towards life and sought refuge in the blessed Tathagata, and Asoka was glad that he was able to convert his brother to the religion of the Buddha.

Vitasoka practised the precepts of Buddhism, travelled all over the country and attained after many years the stage of Arhathood.

One day he happened to return to his city and Asoka was glad to accord him a royal reception. After a brief stay, Vitasoka left the portals of the royal city once again on his travels, but he then felt that he should show some of his supernatural powers. He bodily rose in the thin air and soon vanished out of sight, while Asoka, and his minister Radhagupta and all others stood speechless.

Now it happened that a Brahmin who was very orthodox lived in the city of Pundravardana. He hated the Bhikkus. One day he upset and broke an image of the Buddha at the feet of a Buddhist mendicant. The news spread like wild fire and when Asoka heard this, he ordered that all the Brahmins of Pundravardana be put to death. Asoka did not stop at that, he issued a royal decree that who ever brought the head of a Brahmin, he would present him with a Dinara. Many an innocent Brahmin was put to death.

Meanwhile, Vitasoka who had retreated into the interior of the country found shelter one night in the hut of a poor shepherd, who had heard of the royal decree—the reward of a Dinara. His wife, a shrewd woman, suggested to her husband, "Dear, here is an opportunity to earn a Dinara He looks a Brahmin, we shall slay him and take his head to emperor Asoka."

Vitasoka had reached the "Aparoksha" stage and knew what the shepherd and his wife intended doing. He also knew that the time was ripe for him to cast off the mortal coils. In cool composure, he sat contemplating on the Divine, when suddenly the shepherd hopped off his head with one stroke from behind.

While Asoka sat on his imperial throne the poor shepherd presented to the King the head of Vitasoka. Asoka found it difficult to recognise that that head was that of his brother. But his ministers assured the monarch that the head was that of his brother. Asoka fell fainting and as soon as he recovered, all the eight ministers implored the monarch: "Thy commands, O King, have brought down misfortune on the head of a sage who was relieved from passion. Revoke thy commands and restore security to the people."

Asoka did so immediately.

But the religious who ever wanted explanations asked Minister Upagupta as to why Vitasoka met with such a cruel death. Upagupta explained that Vitasoka as a hunter in one of his former lives had killed a Rishi and hence had to necessarily perish by the sword and for an act of charity in building a dilapidated shrine he was privileged to be born as a prince.

"Om Mani Padmi hum"

Sati Ranak Devi

By Prof. V. RANGACHARYA, M. A.

THERE is on the military road of the tenth century from Anahilapataka, the capital of mediaeval Gujerat, to the historic province of Saurashtra, a place called Wadhwan, which is to-day a petty chiefdom of about thirty villages and which is a spot of no mean interest to the archaeologist and student of history. It was the seat of a garrison which the Solaniki rulers of Gujerat used to maintain for the purpose of keeping Sorath and the peninsula of Kathiawar in subjection. The Chudasama, the Chopatka and other untamed chiefs of the region, who were thorns on the side of Gujerat, were rendered helpless by the presence of this fortified camp; and the pilgrims who had hitherto to slowly wend their way from the mainland along the coast and in a roundabout route to the distant shrines of Somnath and Dvaraka were now rendered able to do it with perfect safety of person and property by a shorter and more direct route. A number of remains, Hindu and Muslim, attest the strategic importance of the place. But the most interesting of them is a small but not plain temple which has been raised over the memorial stone of a lady who has left an undying name behind her as an unjust victim of fate and amiable impersonation of wifely virtue. To the mind which thinks back to those early times of Indian romance, the story of the life and death of Ranak Devi is bound to appeal as a story of noble purpose, from the melancholy effect of which relief can be obtained only by copious tears.

The peninsula of Kathiawar, of which Girnar was the most historic centre did not boast of a more valiant clan than that of the Yadava Chudasamas, of Jungadh in the eleventh century. And of the valiant and romantic Chudasamas Ra Noghan was one of the best. He conquered the whole of the peninsula, and defied even Siddharaj Jayasimha of Patan. Siddharaj, one of the best-remembered heroes of Gujerat history, came to the throne in the year 1094. His father, Karna Raja, had closed his eyes after a fairly long reign of thirty years. Sturdy in arms and benevolent in intentions, he had earned glory for himself and happiness for his subjects. As a soldier he had gained spurs by subduing the Koli chief Dhand who had tamed his wild subjects and built the city of Dhanduka, as well as the Bhil chief Asha who had, from his headquarters at Ashawal (near later Ahmadabad), made his wild followers smile hopefully into the future. Karna had also shown

a noble purpose behind his success, by building the city of Karnavati on the site of later Ahmadabad, and excavating the lake of Karnasagar near Modhera, the seat of the famous Sun Temple built by an illustrious predecessor. This lake sustained the agriculture of the region for centuries till an inordinate fury of the elements blotted out its existence in 1814.

When Karna died, his crown came to be wielded by his son, Sidharaj Jayasimha (1094-1143). It was by no means an easy crown. The age of Sidharaj was small; but his responsibility great. He did not lack the royal virtues. After-events were to show that he possessed them to an extent far from ordinary. But at the time when he assumed the crown, he was a mere child with an uncertain future; and a fear of the unknown crept into the hearts of the well-wishers of the kingdom.

But Providence was kind to the Raj. It brought to the rescue of the state the services of a lady who combined the mildness of a woman with the firmness of a statesman. Queen Miyanal Devi, the young king's mother—who was the daughter of Raja Jayakes of Chandrapura (Goa)—took the burden of the administration on her shoulders. Assisted by a council of three advisers or ministers, she carried on the government not only with unflinching determination but with utilitarian motive at its best. The two reservoirs in her name at Virangam and at Dholka have saved the memory of her existence from death!

The attainment of age by Sidharaj was followed by a new era of military activity. The chief of Junagadh, Ra Noghan, showed signs of restlessness. The Paramara of Malwa was even more defiant. Jayasimha had to meet these. He was a born soldier; and when Ra Noghan advanced into his kingdom, he did not only foil his design but beat him and compelled him, as a mark of submission, to take grass in his mouth! Siddharaj followed this up by a compaign against Malva.

But the chief of Junagadh never forgot his humiliation. He imposed a solemn and sacred duty on his son and successor, Ra Khengar, to avenge his shame and break down the very gates of the proud city of Patan. Ra Khengar, therefore, soon after he had poured water into his dying father's hand as a token of his vow, took advantage of Siddharaja's absence in the campaign against Malwa, pounced on the Solanki capital, broke down its gates and carried them off to Junagadh.

Nor was this all. Shortly after, Siddharaj sought the hand of Ranak Devi, the daughter of a feudatory house of Junagadh. Ra Khengar also aspired for her hand. Ranak Devi's affections went with her political loyalty, and she graced the palace of her liege lord. And in course of time she became a mother of two boys.

Siddharaj had now more than one motive to goad him for action against Junagadh. It was very common in those days for even the smallest states to go about for one another's throats for the sake of territorial aggrandizement. But in the case of Siddharaj there were additional motives than the longing for the broad spaces of Kathiawar. He had to bring back the gates of his capital. He had to win Ranak Devi also. It is true that years had passed since his suit and its rejection, and that Ranak Devi was a mother of two sons. But the memory of humiliation was still fresh in his mind. Reports of Ranak Devi's beauty still inflamed him. His eyes had still the glint of fire in them. His pulses were still stirred by the memory of her.

Thus it was that in 1113 Jayasimha set his troops in motion against Girnar. Ra Khengar was a chief whose nerves had become familiarised with the perils of war. He was defending the two most precious possessions of the Kshatriya—his honour and his lady; but he had traitors in his camp. "It is said", writes the author of the Bombay Gazetter, (Vol. III, p. 494) on the authority of the *Ras mala*, "that Ra Khenger used to stay himself at the Uparkot (citadel of Junagadh but kept Ranik Devdi in his palace in the fortress of Girnar. His nephews, Visal and Desal, were the only persons allowed access there except the guard. Ra Khenger used to go from the Uparkot to the Girnar fortress to visit Ranik Devdi, and one day found Desal there drunk, and in spite of all his protestations, accused him of an improper intimacy with her. Finally he expelled both Desal and Visal, who at once went to Sidharaj, and by obtaining entrance to Uparkot with some cattle carrying grain, they slew the guard and attacked the palace. The Ra came forth and fought and fell in the battle, and the Uparkot was taken".

Thus Ra Khenger paid the penalty of his injustice to his wife whose crystal mind he had failed to appreciate. His kingdom was annexed to Patan, and a provincial Governor named Sajjana was appointed to rule over it. An era, the Jayasimha or, more shortly, the Simha Era, was started by the Solanki conqueror to mark the achievement, and for the next 150 years the records of Solanki Gujerat were dated in it. The lion of the Solanki race was remembered for generations as one whose name was not untrue in eloquently expressing his greatness.

But in a moment the victor learnt that there were other things than victories to secure man's happiness. In the flush of his success, Jayasimha sought an interview with Ranak Devi who unsuspectingly threw open the gates. Conquered by her beauty, he expressed himself that he was the Solanki king and that he was prepared to wait on her, throughout life, hand and foot, like

a bond-slave. But fate had already drawn a line through his happiness. Ranak Devi had come to hate him ; but, unwilling to wound him, she said that she was already a mother of two sons; that she could not forget her husband ; and that she was unsuited to be his queen. But Jayasimha was too much in the transports of passion to listen to her. He saw no obstacle in her being a mother. It was a situation, which he said, could be easily remedied. And, callous to the feeling of blood-guilt in his conscience, he issued the fiendish order to kill the princes.

And thereby he brought ruin on his prospects. When the eyes of the royal murderer met Ranak Devi's, he encountered a new strength in her heart. Breaking into a tempest of weeping and accusations, she denounced her oppressor in a language which he was hardly accustomed to. To her hatred, she said, she now added contempt ; and she made it plain that her life had begun and ended with her husband's, and that she shunned the very notion of life-companionship with the murderer of her lord and children.

Jayasimha realised that he had burnt his wings. He bit his lips in an agony of shame ; but he believed that he had been more unwise than ignoble, more precipitate than wise. He had the vanity to believe that time would be a healer, and that a more noble behaviour on his part would conquer her. He therefore pretended to respect her feeling and took her to his capital. The hands of the sturdy soldier were clasped in tender and respectful salutation to win her. But she was obdurate. She desired no kingdom with such a terrible memory of past life.

Jayasimha now realised that he should strangle his love, that he should take away all from himself! He saw plainly that Ranak Devi was cast for the role of wifely self-sacrifice. In solemn repentance, he asked her what she wanted ; and she replied that she would like to burn herself as a *Sati* on the banks of the Bhogavo at Wadhwan. Jayasimha had no other alternative than to fulfil her desire. And when, on the sacred shore of the Bhogavo, the flames enveloped her, the last thing which was seen of Ranak Devi was that she had her husband's turban clasped in her arms, and the last words heard from her lips were that the proud and unfeeling man who had killed all she held dear should never feel the happiness of a father.

And Jayasimha never had sons to inherit his crown. He lived to do great things, to conquer and to build ; but he was a failure as a man ; and when he raised the temple over the ashes of the martyred lady, he knew that his happiness in this life was also already reduced to ashes.

Nicholas Roerich

By BARNETT. D. CONLAN.

(Continued from our previous issue.)

ROERICH himself seems well aware of the deadening effects of certain 'scientific' attitudes when he contrasts the impression made by Tibetan banner paintings, among their native mountains, with that derived from them in our Museums where 'we examine them with respect or else with clerical sense of the scientific'.

The way we have been moving since the nineteenth century does not suggest that for the moment Asia need envy us enormously. Many of our scientific applications may, unless there is some serious reaction, land us in a negative and disastrous state of things. We have only to plunge out of the glorious sunlight into any of our Under-ground Railways 'in the leafy month of June' and find ourselves wedged in with thousands of citizens slowly destroying their eyesight in order to learn about the latest crime, and we shall begin to have doubts about machinery and printing presses. One glance at the atrocious advertisements and at the employees struggling against microbes with their disinfectants, and we are more and more disinclined to listen about the backward conditions of Asia.

It is in moments such as these that we remember 'The Book of Wisdom,' a picture in which the painter shows us a young lama seated near the precipice, studying a sacred volume, before the most magnificent panorama that this world possesses.

Roerich is right, then, when he insists upon the importance of art, because it is the one power that can effectively deal with those evils that have arisen from a mechanical order based on the utilitarian and commercial ideals of the nineteeth century.

But from Roerich and the mountains, we can, if we care, derive an endless source of joy, an inexhaustible stimulant to higher things.

For when we examine carefully the character of his art, the depth of his writings, and the wonderful discoveries transmitted by him regarding those finer energies which are the basis of all life, we have to recognize that all this constitutes one of the most powerful antidotes known to us against the worst evils of our mechanical civilization and the dark forces about us.

And a sense of the Beauty of Asia is not the least of his qualities,—in fact, it is one of the rarest.

He has the artist's and poet's eye for fine things, and even while leading his caravan through the robber-infested regions north of the Tian-Shan, he will find time to note "The Beauty of wild peonies against blue snow mountains and chryoprase of the hills of Dzungaria" which reminds us of the Chinese poet who wrote so long ago:

'The snow has gone from Chung-nan; spring is almost come
Lovely in the distance its blue colour against the brown of the streets.'

In these short pen pictures there is much of the spirit of the Chinese poets—Tu Fu, Li-tai-pai, Lo-Yu.

"The cuckoo ruminates on his long life. White linen is spread on the meadow and a samovar is boiling. The eyes of violets and the white of yellow narcissus are woven into a carpet of many hues. A row of boatmen stir their canopied boats. Oxen drag themselves along and the wheels grind there where three hundred year old plantains and tall poplars guard the ways"

A miniature half Persian, half Chinese and replete with the beauty of Asia!

Again, as he prepares to cross the great desert, he tells us:

"Early are the stars aglow here. Towards the East undiminished flames the triple starred constellation of Orian, the constellation which finds its way through all teachings."

And we are reminded of those fine lines of an ancient Chinese poet who wrote:

"In the distance perceptible dim, dim—the fire of approaching dawn.
And a single row of stars lying to the west of the Five Gates"

Roerich's work may be said to supply what the world most lacks—a sense of the Poetry of the Wild, of lofty mountain regions, of mystery, beauty, and rare colour, and, withal, signs of some approaching aristocracy of the spirit.

And in all his work he would seem to operate from some immense ring of time only perceptible to himself. If, in the west, he divines the Beauty of the Stone Age and the Druidic landscape of a far-off past, in Asia he has approached the early myths and legends with the sympathy, intuition and inspiration of an Asiatic.

It is surprising to see how the style of some of these paintings of Central Asia recalls that of the art of the Han dynasty.

They have much of the concentration, the simplicity, the 'raccourci' of these early ornaments in jade and this is very significant because the technique of such work was something half spiritual.

And he has gone so far round the ring of time as to have advanced into the Future.

In the Louvre gallery in Paris (Section: Jeu do Paume) there is one of his most remarkable landscapes entitled 'Paysage du Thibet' (Castles of Maitreya).

It is a work which is in some ways a sign of the Future and, I have reason to believe that it is in advance of our time. As I was examining it, on one occasion, some youthful sportsmen came along and catching sight of the picture gave a long-drawn whistle.

From this I inferred that they thought the work was a knock out. And so it is.

The coincidence struck me. I realised that the younger generation is, after all, on the side of Roerich and that, from every point of view, he is not in the rear of our modern movements, as many might like to think, but a long way ahead!

The modern craze for hiking, camping and for winter sports is perhaps the best thing that has happened with us for many years.

Those who return from the mountains can hardly contain their delight, they are literally intoxicated with the air of the heights and the beauty of the scenery.

This is significant because Roerich has been living a great part of his life in this way and it would suggest that the healthiest elements in the West are, by the general trend of life itself, being brought into line with his own simplicity.

And just as Cezanne by means of a purely material approach attained to a spiritual insight into the world of forms and appearances, so the younger generation, the advance-guard of the West, may have begun its ascent towards the height—in its own way.

Some day we may be in a position to recognize that the sphere of the spirit and that of a higher dynamism are one and the same.

At that moment there will be a world-wide interest in Roerich's work, for it will be generally felt that he alone among the great painters of our day has been consistent in painting the landscape of this higher sphere.

This picture in the Louvre, therefore, is a sign of the Future. These precipices of dark cobalt with chasms of purple carry their meaning by sheer force of colour.

Nothing could be more modern than the treatment, for the subject is completely lost in the aesthetic qualities of the work, so that most of the other exhibits in the gallery appear illustrational.

The technique is not European but something rather akin to that of the Brahmanical artists of Ancient India, whose art was a form of Yoga.

These sanctuaries and citadels seem to have been forged by the red and golden fires of the spirit and they convert the world around them to a royal purple !

I thought of the phrase that I had heard pronounced more than twenty years ago by Guillaume Apollinaire, the inspirer of almost all the movements in modern painting :

" L'instinct est retrouve " (instinct has been recovered) and standing before Roerich's ' Castles of Maitreya ' I could not refrain from triumphantly exclaiming " L'esprit est retrouve ".

A little further on we can see the works of Bakst, Benois, Gontcharova and other well-known Russian artists who, with Roerich, created those fine stage settings for the Russian Opera in 1912.

At that time there may have been some similarities of style; to-day the difference is startling. Roerich would seem to have advanced as far, in matters of style, as his caravan has gone into the heart of Asia. There is nothing to resemble this picture in the whole gallery. It suggests some fine lacquer work dense with time which has been kept in one of those great temples at Nara. In colour alone, it is something far and remote from Western civilization. Intuitively one thinks of Nara and its ancient shrines, and this is perhaps no chance association.

For the period of Nara, the age of the Tang, of Li-tai-pai, of Kalidasa and the great bronze Vairocana Buddhas, was an age of art. It was the moment when Buddhism, leaving its pure abstractions, joined with art and science to explore the Cosmos and give life its highest possible value.

This is exactly what Roerich is asking us to do.

He may, for all we know, be round again on the spiral of time to a point corresponding to this rare period, a point which, from his high station in the Himalayas, he proclaims as the age of Maitreya.

Whether such a parallel will be justified some day it is too soon to say. It is sufficient, for the moment, that the style and coloring of one of his pictures is able to suggest it.

It would be a mistake to judge of Roerich's art from reproductions.

Many of his larger works are impossible to reproduce in monotone since the composition itself is dependent upon the colour scheme.

In the case of such a work as Paysage du Thibet, a monotone plate only gives a false idea of the artist's work.

Without its marvellous coloring this picture loses all its value, all its meaning.

There are cases, however, where monotone reproductions come out very well, but these are nearly always those works where outline predominates and the drawing is an integral part of their beauty.

Many of these smaller reproductions show a finesse and definition which reminds us of the perfection of Chinese poetry.

Others, like that grove of bamboos in the Himalayas, evoke subconscious states which we only meet with in the more esoteric poets, such as Holderlin or Yeats.

In 'Sanctuaries and Citadels' he shows us the rare proportions realized by these Lama builders of Tibet and Central Asia. These 'fortresses of thought' reflect the beauty of the surrounding peaks. Their stone piles seem to have grown from the precipices and the rocks with all the natural beauty of the cedar or the pine.

Roerich reveals their wonderful symmetry by setting their great towers in the same plane as that of some distant peak, and this gives us the impression of an architectural grandeur worthy to stand alongside that of Edfu.

One feels that those who built these places were aristocrats, in the real sense of the word, and akin to the builders of our great cathedrals.

The passage of Roerich through Central Asia, then, was an event of no little importance in the world of art. Had he brought back work, merely illustrational, it would have been a great achievement, but when we consider that most of these paintings are works of a high order then it becomes incredible.

Few artists in Europe could have sustained so great an output under such difficulties and hardships. The over-coming, of obstacles, however, is one of Roerich's favourite doctrines which makes him a sort of trait d' union between Nietzche and Asia.

The real Nietzche was much nearer to the builders of these Sanctuaries and Citadels than to those who have made a caricature of him.

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After his contact with these strongholds of Tibet there would seem to be a corresponding change in Roerich's style. The soft rhythms of much of his early work with their Hindu outlines changed to a harder and more Chinese type of Rhythm. Between his latest production and those early Russian paintings there is all the difference between the jagged precipices of Tibet and the suave contours of northern Russia.

There are times, however, when a fusion of these two tendencies gives a rare product which comes very near to what we might call perfection, something that suggests Mozart or Sophocles.

His picture of Mongolian dancers moving round a magic circle is a work of this order.

The gigantic banner paintings, as high as a temple, stretched on scaffolding make a scenic background beyond which stand a range of mountains.

The materials and surroundings before us do not differ very sensibly from those of a country fair. The effect, however, is so surprising that, compared with this rustic *mise en scene*, our grand opera seems unsatisfying and artificial.

The thing is as fine as one of those Athenian choruses of Sophocles. It has the vital beauty of whatever pertains to folklore and plein air. The proportions are of an astounding harmony. It is as if the Great Ones on the banners had answered to this invocation and cast their influence on all around. We are irresistibly attracted to the profound and simple beauty of these people, whose style has nothing in it that is foreign to the march of the stars or the solemnity of the mountains. Marvellous Mongolia!

Had Roerich painted nothing but this picture, he would have done something inimitable, because he would have been the first to reveal the inner beauty of this distant land.

There is another picture 'The Messenger' a figure standing in a sort of spiritual silence before an open door, which was painted many years before, but which has much the same spirit as that of these dancers.

One feels that in such work the artist had attained to that perfect poise which is synonymous with spiritual insight.

In the paintings 'Menhirs in Mongolia' and 'The Guardian of the Chalice' there would seem at first a risk that the artist should allow himself to give more attention to the archaeological contents of the picture than to its plastic qualities.

These weird monoliths seem to threaten the composition, by their uncompromising attitudes, and break the harmony of its

design. But if we grow familiar with it we shall find that the artist has overcome an aesthetic difficulty by the weight of foreground which, by its horizontal movement, corrects this impression and restores the balance.

It is just this sense of difficulty overcome which gives value to such a composition.

'Menhirs and Mongolia' is a typical Roerich landscape because the impression that it leaves is not so much that of any particular scene as of a state of mind, of vision into a world of the Beyond. It is a Druidic landscape where the ridges of the hills and the shapes of ancient stones have been worn smooth by the winds of countless ages.

And the artist looks upon it all with the eye of an ancient Druid, almost with the age-long experience of the crescent moon. One feels that his vision is older than that of many a Lama, that it partakes of that immense antiquity which characterises the Celt.

Time has carried away everything superfluous and left only the essential, the substratum of life. One has only to think for a moment of the landscape of Constable or Corot, gay with oakwood and willow, to realise the stern architectural character of this art.

Although painting is one of the oldest of the arts, landscape painting in the West is but a recent development which seems to have sprung up about the time when the symphony broke away from the ploypbonic music of the Church, in order to develop into the great and independent art of Beethoven.

The Chinese practised the art of pure landscape something like a thousand years before the West, which would seem to show that in some ways they were much more cultivated.

If Claude Lorraine was the father of Western landscape, and the Dutch showed an early delight in natural scenery, it was not until the time of Constable and Turner, however, that a general interest in the art began to be felt.

It is from these two painters that France derived, for the most part, her landscape art and brought forth Corot and the school of Fontainbelau.

Landscape, therefore, is a comparatively modern development, and Turner is still what Ruskin claimed him to be, 'the greatest of all landscape painters.'

Ruskin wrote several volumes to show Turner's truth to Nature and Claude's untruth.

To-day his arguments have less weight since, as Apollinaire showed, "Lavri semblance n'a plus aucune importance". Modern critics reverse Ruskin's judgement of Claude for purely aesthetic motives. Neither Ruskin's criticisms nor the opinion of modern critics, however, need trouble us if we examine Turner's work for what it can give us.

And we shall find there something unique, something beyond analysis, something utterly defying imitation—the presence of that imponderable element we call 'great poetry'.

Wandering all over the Europe of his day, Turner seized the spirit that is in places, the poetry of sea and earth and sky.

Having had occasion recently to go through central France all along the Loire, I kept an eye open for the Turners that loomed up—Orleans, Amboise, Beaugency, Blois, Loire-side Tours —and there they were, these majestic chateaux and cathedrals, just as he had seen them more than a century ago, for Turner only saw what was enduring in the beauty of water, sky and stone.

Turner undoubtedly is one of the greatest creators in landscape that ever lived and, after him, I believe, comes Roerich.

Roerich, in common with our epoch, is vast and far-stretching, with a sense of Asia rising on the horizon. But the spirit is the same ; he has an eye for the poetry of places and landscapes and like Turner he has the wizard touch which is the privilege of genius.

The landscape painter, like the poet, is born and not made. Great landscape is something akin to great music, it is a spiritual construction the ingredients of which may be no more than the stones in a cathedral.

Whether the poetic radiations of such a work derive exclusively from the plastic design, or from remote and subtle associations beyond analysis, is of no consequence; the result is all that need concern us.

And here Roerich approaches very near to Turner. He is one of the few who have built up a great art out of landscape, an art in which " more is meant than meets the eye".

Such an art is typically modern. It has something 'insaisissable' as the French would say, something in common with the more subtle kinds of music.

Turner was in advance of his time and in advance of Ruskin, whose rather objective outlook may have made him miss not a few of the rarer qualities of his idol.

In some of his unfinished works, such as Chichester Canal, there is a subtle appeal, far ahead of his age which puts him in touch with the symbolists and with musicians like Debussy and Duparc.

Turner whose work contained all the poetry of Scott, Byron, Wordsworth and Shelley, was a prodigious artist, and of such marvellous industry that it would require at least a hundred years merely to copy all he produced.

Since his time, there have been highly productive artists but few who possess his exquisite 'finesse', his sense of the etherial regions of light.

Roerich has this in common with Turner – he is a great poet. If Turner went on horseback and walked all over Europe to produce what has been termed 'A poem of matchless splendour and beauty', then, Roerich has done much the same for Asia.

Moreover both artists have the same profound adoration for Nature.

By day and night Turner made his way past forests and mountains and along the sea coasts visiting almost all the ancient cities and monuments of Europe.

The very titles of his pictures have a strange appeal— "Steamboat off the harbour-mouth making signals and going by the lead. The author was in this storm the night the 'Ariel' left Harwich." The title alone, as well as the word 'author' suggests that Turner was, in fact, a great poet whose medium was painting.

And while his more successful contemporaries never left their fashionable studios in town, here he was getting himself bound to the mast of a sinking vessel in order to paint a shipwreck.

The same sort of thing seems to have happened to Roerich. We find him at work under difficulties which would have been quite enough for men like Scott and Nansen, and yet he goes on producing remarkable works amid the glaciers and precipices of Asia with the thermometer a long way below zero.

And all the time the great pundits of Cubism, Futurism and Post Impressionism have never left the urban machinery that makes for fame—their hotels, telephones, press connections and cafe congregations, in which they resemble those dapper little men who haunt the Stock Exchanges and who, one feels sure, have never seen a tree.

(To be continued)

Elephant Capture in Kheddas

The Spectacular Mysore Method

By S. R.

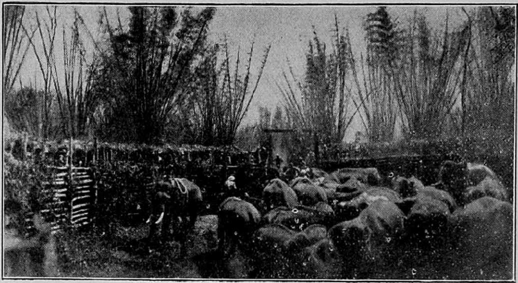
ONE of the most impressive sights are the Khedda operations or the capture of wild elephants in the Mysore States. This method is peculiar to this part of the country. A whole herd of wild elephants is slowly hemmed into a series of artificial enclosures and finally secured with ropes. Readers must have got some idea of this from the spectacular London production "The Elephant Boy" featuring the Indian boy star, Sabu.

There is a general impression that the Khedda operations are only arranged for sport and serve little utilitarian purpose. But this idea is erroneous, as many who have a more intimate knowledge of this part of the country would testify. Herds of wild elephants make occasional raids into the cultivated fields that lie close to the forest belt and work havoc there. Nothing short of a wholesale destruction of the herd would drive them away. To prevent such ruthless killing of valuable game which would otherwise follow, the entire herd is captured within skillfully-contrived enclosures and ultimately tamed.

A knowledge of the general lie of the land would be helpful to follow the effectiveness of this method. The Mysore Tableland has most of its forest lands in the western and southern borders. These are the forests that cover the valleys and slopes of the Nilgiri mountains, and here herds of wild elephants have made them their home and have roamed free and unhurt for centuries. The mountain slopes are clothed with dense vegetation.

During the rains food is plentiful in the pasture lands at the foot of the hills and herds muster strong. It is then that they encroach on the cultivated fields adjacent to it. In the dry months fodder is scarce on these plains and elephants gradually retire to the upper slopes of the hills where there is always a supply of green food.

The Khedda operations take place during the wet months when the elephants come down from the hill slopes. The site for the traps is selected at the foot of the hills in some thick forest, which they usually frequent. The trap itself is actually completed in the dry months during the absence of the herd.



The site where the operations now take place is in Kakankote forest. This site has been selected by Mr. Sanderson, who was called 'Hathee (elephant) king', in the year 1890, when the Duke of Clarence visited Mysore as the heir-presumptive to the English Throne. Kakankote is about 50 miles from Mysore city. There is plenty of forage for the elephants in this area, which makes it easy to entice the herd.

The selected site is fenced round with lines of stout poles which are driven into the earth, with strong cross-pieces tied to it with rope, so as to make it difficult for the elephants to break through. The space inside is divided into three separate enclosures of varying sizes, the first being the biggest, the next one about an acre in extent and the last being the smallest. Openings are made in the lines of fencing, leading from the outside to all the three enclosures in succession. These openings are closed by a set of massive drop gates, which are manipulated by ropes from a distance. The enclosures are surrounded by a trench 8 feet deep and about 9 feet wide.

Lines of fence and trench stretch out on either side from the outer entrance to the first enclosure across the width of the valley, widening out as they go, so as to collect the herds that come down the hill slopes in that region. If by any chance the herds do not come down that way, beaters are engaged to spot the herds on the top of the valley and slowly drive them to the area between the lines of fencing and thence to the main entrance. Hundreds of beaters are engaged in this work.

Once the herd is driven to the main entrance, it is easy to scare them into the first enclosure. But it sometimes happens that one or two animals get suspicious and refuse to enter the opening, which leads to a general stampede by the rest of the herd. To prevent this a line of beaters are posted near the entrance and free use is made of blank cartridges, lighted torches, trumpets and shouting, and in the resulting din the refractory animals turn back into the enclosure and run for cover like frightened sheep. The drop gates are then lowered and made secure.

There must be a plentiful supply of food and water in the first enclosure, so that the herd may not be in want of either during the time they are kept there. The animals are left there till such time as it is convenient to start the drive into the roping enclosure.

The entire herd is now inside. There are tuskers, females and quite a good number of babies as well.

The second enclosure is cleared of underwood, and only large trees are allowed to stand. This is the roping enclosure.

The last enclosure is where the animals are kept after roping and for this, it is cleared of everything.

Roping is the most thrilling part of the Khedda operations and needs great skill and experience. A large number of tame elephants, or " Koomkies " as they are called, with experienced mahouts mounted on their necks, and lynx-eyed noosers with ropes ready in their hands, enter the roping enclosure. The connecting drop gate between the first and the second enclosures is lifted and the beaters drive a few animals from there to the roping enclosure, closing it again to prevent the rest of the herd from following. The animals require a good deal of coaxing to make them enter. It is often the female elephants that are refactory and prove troublesome.

The animals have to be roped one after the other, and for this, one is separated from the others and the tame elephants close up all round so as to make it impossible to escape. By this time noosers get down and skilfully try to lasso the hind legs of the animal from the ground. This is a very tricky business and one which the elephant tries his best to dodge. The brute would turn and twist and make all kinds of antics and would even try to remove the loop from the legs with his trunk. But the noosers ultimately win and succeed in securing the hind legs. The ends of these ropes are wound round the tame elephants. The neck ropes are then put in, and with the help of the 'Koomkies' the captive is dragged to a tree and securely tied with ropes. When all the animals are dealt with in this manner the drop gate is again opened and a few more animals are let in. In this way the entire herd is disposed of; but it might take several days to complete this.

From the roping enclosure the animals are taken to the last enclosure, where they are tied up and given food and water.

There is always the element of danger in the process of capture. For, it may be recalled that during the visit of the Duke of Clarence to Mysore, the Prince had a very narrow escape from death. The Prince wanted to get a nearer view of the roping and as it was thought that with the several tame elephants inside the enclosure there would be little danger from the wild ones, he entered the roping enclosure with Sanderson, who was in charge of the operations. An eye-witness has described the incident thus :—

The Prince was intently watching a young tusker being dragged to a tree when suddenly there went up a shout and a great female was seen to break through the encircling tame ones and rush straight in the direction of the Prince. Our hearts were in our mouths ; some involuntarily closed their eyes as if to shut out the sight of our Empire's heir torn limb from

limb or crushed out of human shape. What would the Prince of our Royal House do ?

The furious beast charged down on him with several tame ones close on her heels. The Prince calmly waited her approach, but when the brute was within a dozen paces, Sanderson, who had been standing beside the Prince all the while, stepped forward, raised his hand and shouted. Well was he called the 'Hathee king'! As if obedient to an order, the brute turned sharply to the left and made off.

The tame elephants play a very prominent part in the capture of the herds and without their help it would be almost impossible to rope them without casuality.

Geography in Verse No. 3.

The Pigmy Land

The Pigmy people have their home
In the torrid land of the tallest trees ;
Where the Congo's rushing waters foam,
To the scorching forest's thirst appease !
The damp, dark jungle's greenery
Breeds venomed serpents beautiful ;
And birds of colour-brilliancy
On gaudy wings look wonderful !

The Pigmies are keen shikaries !—
With arrows venomed-tipped and bows
They kill their jungle enemies—
Those swift death-dealing giant foes :
The graceless hippopotamus,
The elephant and the crocodile,
The leopard and the rhinoceros,
By hundreds found in one square mile !

The Pigmies dress like Cupid sweet,
And dwell in huts of leaves and twigs ;
And honey eat, and dried raw meat,
With bananas and jungle figs.
Some Negro tribes in neighbourhood
Grow bananas in abundance
With Pigmies barter these for food,
Without the slightest reluctance !

—*Jehangir R. P. Mody.*

Conqueror

By The Rev. F. H. ALDHOUSE.

THE hills of dreams of many shapes from emerald and be-flowered mounts to stark crag and bare rock rise above the sea of Eternity.

The still grey waters of that silent ocean stretch out without bounds unplumbed and unmeasured to infinity. Between the hills into the shoreless sea the sky-blue waters of time, an ever-flowing river, rush and are lost.

Two gods sat in contemplation by that river gazing into the swirls and eddies of the flow. One was bright as the morning Angus, the Ever Young, the lord of love. One was both dark and lived, not only looking with two eyes, but with a third open in his forehead. He was Balor-of-the-mighty-blows—grim lord of death.

Picture after picture rose in the moving waters, formed and flowed and faded. They passed as little reflections on the surface of a stream going by, but they were lives, and events and epochs.

The steady unblinking eyes of the two gods beheld all, and if what they saw moved them, no change of attitude or of countenance betrayed the fact. Suddenly the elder of the two broke out into a roar of bleak laughter and addressed the younger mockingly.

" Well, dear playboy ? " he tittered. " So grave is your face one might think you had some control over things. Yet everything you start ends in just the same old way. A child, a man or woman, laughter, tears, hopes, fears ; and then they meet an invisible opponent. Some resist me more desperately than others and are the more amusing in consequence, but all fall. They have no crown for a victor, they find every oracle is dumb or cheats, and back to the dust they go, the blind, deaf, unfeeling dust. An eddy on the stream resolves itself, others form and so the merry game goes on. Aren't you a liltle tired, Young One ? Every struggle brings defeat. Why this unceasing out-pouring of lives ? I am called cruel by our brother-gods and you kind. Nevertheless it is I who give peace, and you continual stress and strain which is painful as it is futile."

Angus gazed at the speaker with great blue questioning eyes and meditated on his answer.

" Balor," he answered. " It is true that I lose to you in our continual contest, many times. None the less the last battle shall be mine. I may create Perfection tomorrow or in long ages hence, but I will make perfect lives yet and against them you will be powerless. There is always some chink in the armour I give my creatures. I make and you test. It is thus that I shall learn to produce a flawless shield against which your sword shall smite in vain."

Balor pointed to a larger swirl in the waters of time. " A thing of beauty is perishing," he grinned, " it cannot save itself by its loveliness nor can you save. O you unhappy god."

As he spoke, Angus rose from the stone seat on the hill of dreams. He plunged into the waters of time and vanished in their depth.

" Ah, would you so ?" sneered Balor and he became a dark shadow and melted into the stream where his rival had dissappeared :—

A man pale and haggard was being led to the death by fire of the auto-da-fey. Friars unceasingly urged him to recant, but the sanbenito and mitre-like cap he wore were painted with flames and dancing devils,—a sign he was a hopelessly doomed victim of the Holy Office.

" Cease, my brothers. You seem more afraid to burn me than I am to burn. The Infinite glory of the plurality or worlds shows the Infinite glory of their creator. I do not believe in a god who is a torturer or an executioner. I lean on God's justice as upon a pillar of his throne. I believe in the Good Law, the infinity of life's growth. I believe in Love Eternal, unvanquished by evil."

" Quite a mind formed to adore you, dear Playboy. It is unfortunate he does not know you. What about appearing to him when the flames lick his limbs : but he will have plenty of them and may ignore you." sneered Balor.

Angus looked with infinite compassion at the brave man dressed in robes of horror and hurried to a fiery death.

" It is willed by the Eternal Law that he must die here and now " he told himself. " He is a victim of the Love, Truth and the Beauty his heart has glimpsed. Love is condemned ; it is really I who........."

In a moment so brief that even the mind of Balor could not record it, a substitution had been effected. The prisoner stood in Eternity wrapped in Angus' robes of Immortality and crowned with his crown of joy. While Angus was being bound to the

stake and the faggots piled about him, a roar, customary at such sad and appalling ceremonies, 'burn the dog's beard' was raised by the stupid and brutal crowd. The executioner in a business-like way prepared to apply a burning branch of furze to the now bearded face, a perfect reproduction of the former victim's.

"Good," Balor grinned, "now, you blasted fool, you shall know what life is. Love, he? ha, ha! But what is the glare? One would think the sun was descending into this Field of Flowers. Certainly the Romans have a dry humour to call the place that. Brighter still?—"

At that moment, though the crowd and the inquisitors saw only that the sun shone in its full strength, a figure of Sunlight stood on the platform of death.

"Enough, my son." spoke Lamfada (Lu Lavada 'all-reaching Light') as he touched the pinioned figure. Angus Oge was released. In his place a scare-crow, stuffed with straw, stood, bound to the post, unperceived by the onlookers.

Lu said "You have offered yourself as a burnt-offering to ME, O Love. You have done a perfect deed. I accept your sacrifice, but remit the flames of aught but your burning heart."

So the great Good God vindicated the Eternal struggle and suffering of the Ever Young.

Angus Oge with his new friend the late heretic entered a victor into his own green home Moy Elga, and Balor learned that there is a power more mighty than pain and death and shall be the final conqueror.

Reviews.

Mysticism of Time in the Rig Veda: By Dr. Mohan Singh, Lahore. pp. 64. Atma Ram & Sons, Lahore, India. Price Rs. 5.

Many have been the attempts to discover the inner significance of the Vedas. There have been many attempts: (1) A naturalistic attempt, (2) a supranaturalistic attempt, (3) a geological attempt, (4) a critical attempt, (5) a mystic attempt, and as if these are not sufficient enough to exhaust the immense fertility of the Veda, we have the latest work trying to find a new significance more in accord with the genius of the Veda, as the author claims, but which, so far as we could discover, is only one more attempt, unavailing and at best unfathoming. The work under review seeks to establish the correspondence between Time, Space and Causality with the astronomical Year, ritual Sacrifice and Speech respectively. Dr. Mohan Singh considers that the previous attempts at the understanding of the Rig Vedic Consciousness failed in their purposes because of their "failure to accept the law of Divine Correspondences and their failure to disentangle the triple mixture." This attempt at disentangling is indeed very welcome if only the reader were permitted to keep their unity in their synthetic vision whilst yet perceiving their triple distinctions. This would be possible under conditions of immense clarity. Whilst we concede to the author the originality in the framing of the problem, we find it impossible to congratulate him for his presentation of his solution. This is not intended to minimise the importance of the work under review, but only to complain against the manner of presentation.

The first section of the work under review traces the time-space-causation correspondences in the Veda and points out the intimate connexion subsisting between the states of consciousness, the seasons of the year and the astronomical phenomena. Next we find Time is related to Prana, and prana is then related to mind. So much so it is one of the regular habits of the Vedic seer to *substitute* any one of the three in the place of any one of them. In other words, the three (or more) words symbolically refer to every one amongst them. This is a very important principle since it is by means of the discovery of this principle that we arrive at the inner kernel of the Veda. A wealth of quotations is thrown in to show that the Vedic Consciousness which the learned doctor calls "Totalitarian" (one is reminded of the latest political fad) is really of multiple planes, of multiple references and cross-references, is three-fold, nine-fold, fourteen-fold, or eighteen-fold. The inner meaning of any one of these planes could only be arrived at by the inner symbolic reference and the substitution of the figures of one plane in the place of figures normally belonging to the other planes.

The second section takes up the work of substantiation of the thesis already stated, but now it is with reference to the three-fold planes of adhibhautika, adhidaivika and adhyatmika that the learned author discusses the totalitarian consciousness. He relates these three planes or references to the active, devotional and cognitive consciousness levels, and these in turn he relates with the Physical, Godly and Meta-physical or philosophical consciousness. In this section the author tries to show that the triple planes, levels or consciousnesses are of two-fold activity, the progressive

and the reversed, the pravritti-marga and the nivritti-marga. Time is progressed activity, prana, just as prana is reversed time. Control of Prana means reversal of time and is Yoga; similarly devotional consciousness is reversed space; and Consciousness, prajna, is itself reversed causality. What in one plane is the truth of its plane is in another of a reversed character and their inter-relationship is one of intriguing nature and yet we cannot see how we can avoid the effort to find a solution of the greatest problem set by the Veda which is the most ancient creative literature of the Aryans.

The third section deals with the symbolism and structure of Prayer. Yoga, we are told on the authority of the Brihad-devata, is combination of prayer. The author takes up the clue in the definition and follows up with the inquiry of what is prayer a combination of? He finds the clue in the word samhita which literally means conjunction. All creation is due to conjunction. Conjunction of two lips, of Prana and the Nadi, of Man and Woman, of Sun and Moon, of Uttarayana and Dakshinayana, of Atma and Paramatma. The eclipse which the Hindus worship, not out of fear but out of the reverence for the truth intimated by it is also a case of conjunction. Conjunction, the author rightly says, is the object of all contemplation. But the author Dr. Mohan Singh must be aware that not all conjunction can yield knowledge since it is the conjunction of atma and matter that leads to ignorance. (vide Samkhya). But there is indeed great truth in the suggestion that all conjunctions are worthy of great and deep study for the truths that they might yield. Science is the study of these conjunctions. Conjunction of mind and object yields knowledge. The great contemplations are of the worlds, of the conjunctions in the stars (jyotisha), in Knowledge (vidya), in progeny (praja) and the Self (Atma). The study of these conjunctions belongs to the several sciences or rather gives rise to them. The processes of Geology, Astronomy, Literature. Biology and Philosophy are all creative processes arising out of conjunctions.

Every one of these conjunctions we said, leads to a synthesis, which is a new creation. Two combine to yield a third. The Aitereya Upanishad suggests several such conjunctions of two leading to a third. Yoga is this combination of two into a third. It is always a synthesis. Praise itself is the effort of combination of the individual and the supreme yielding the fruition of coitional consciousness which is the supreme Unity or Yoga. This is the significance of the Taittiriya method of Upasana.

Every word of the Veda (indeed according to the ancients as well as the author of the work under review) has a three-fold significance, if not five-fold dimension in meaning. There is at once reference to geography, astro-physics, and psychology and super-planes of consciousness. Agni has a five-fold significance for example and provided we take the trouble to investigate, we can come across the five-fold or, since the mansions of the Divine are infinite, multi-dimensional reference of all words in the Veda.

As the author in the beginning of the fifth section says " the mysticism of time is the mysticism of the Uttarayana, of union of sun and moon and Orion (Rohini) (Orion has always been associated with Mrigasirsa, and this is a variation that the author does not explain), of Ida and Pingala in the Sushumna, of Sandhya, Sandhi in Samadhi. The Month of realisation is Magha-phalguna chaitra and the conjunction of Moon, Orion and Sun in Sravishta or Dhanishta. All these statements are unexplained and the whole chapter wriggles with difficulties, and the presentation of facts does

not make the task of understanding easy. Undoubtedly there is truth, or rather there should be, shall we say. But to proceed, the author says there is close correspondence between astro-physical phenomena and psychological contemplation attitudes. This truth, we might easily admit, is at the bottom of all the regulations of periods and times when contemplation or learning of Veda is advised or prohibited. Thus whenever there happens square to the sun of the moon or opposition of moon to the sun or conjunction, there should be contemplation of what has been learnt rather than study. The period is the period of Yoga. The Chitta-vritti-nirodha—control of mental modifications of Yoga--corresponds to the conquest of Ignorance that covers the face of reality through Self-analysis and Gnosis. It also corresponds physiologically speaking to the conquest of Six psycho-physical centres with the help of the Muladhara force wherein the supreme Serpent power resides. Equally suggestive is the statement that Vrata or penance askesis binds the Vrittis (mental modifications) and the Rig Vedic corresponds with the conquest of Vritra by Indra.

Here we find one important and indeed the most ingenious and the original contribution of Dr. Mohan Singh to the study of Vedic Totalitarian Consciousness (what Sri Aurobindo would call Integral Consciousness). In his own words, " there is no character in the Smritis, and the Puranas which is not in the Vedas; the characters in the Brahmanas and the Upanisjads are in the Samhitas." The only difference is that the names undergo a slight modification. " Generally the clue is the *first letter*." We could find the Vrittis, Vrata, Vritra all along represent facts concerning the fact of change and modification and control of the same. From this general principle he draws an interesting and by no means un-understandable theory that "all current explanations of schools of thought, Gotras, tribes, kingly dynasties, are fanciful. They are not history so far as the Vedic consciousness is concerned"—a statement which many of our proud kings and priests will resent.

There is an interesting closing article on Soma which, the author contends, is the male creative principle in the Universe and in the "prayers to and praises to Soma this male creative principle is 'named' in all possible forms it has taken in the three worlds, on the seven planes, and in the different branches of Art and Science." In the Brahmanas Soma is Savita, Aishvarya, Prasava. Soma in tantras is Tara. In Vedanta it is *Tat* (That). Soma is dhara (that which is taken upwards) through Sacrifice. Thus the connotations of the word are varied and yet express that one fundamental intuition of creative upward—moving force of light, power, of synthesis and urge. Whatever its meaning is and we agree with Dr. Mohan Singh, it is not what one learned University Professor tried to make topical redicule of as the Vedic seers, Drink or toddy made out of fermentation of exudations of trees, nor is it (though it is certainly more preferable) what a writer in the RAS Journal suggested, a himalayan *ragi* extract. It is such lectures as these that reveal an incapacity to perceive the inner spirit of the Vedas which are *par excellence* literature of Moksha and Mysticism. Sri Aurobindo on this point suggests that Soma symbolises the replacing of our ordinary enjoyments by the Divine Ananda, and says that the offering of Soma at sacrifice is one of the highest levels of attainment.

We congratulate the author for his original work and hope that in his promised other works on Mysticism he would make an undoubtedly difficult subject easier to follow and admire.

K. C. Varadachari, M. A., Ph. D.

What is Hinduism? By D. S. Sarma, M. A. Principal, Pachaippa's College, Madras. Published by the author. Price Rs. 1—8—0.

This is another substantial contribution from Sri Sarma. It gives the fundamentals of Hinduism in very clear English. The seven chapters are comprehensive of the subject and contain instructive passages on the basis of our religion, our ethics, our philosophy etc. The author's liberal interpretation of *Dharma* and his lucid clarification of the much-misunderstood *Maya* doctrine require to be specially mentioned. We also appreciate the rational and clear presentation of the matter and the rich catholicity of spirit that pervades the book. The stress on the elasticity of our religion comes refreshingly upon a dogma-ridden, superstition-swayed land.

It is not possible in a small book to be quite exhaustive about religion. Indeed, a scholarly exposition of our religion has not been Sri Sarma's aim. His aim is humbler. The book is intended as a text book for the college classes. And this claim, we feel, has been well justified too. It is one of the shameful features of our educational system that our young men (and women, though to a lesser extent) have no clear ideas about our religion and philosophy. Our philosophy students know just enough to know that two or three years study, often half-hearted, is not enough to acquire any idea of our philosopey except its vastness and profundity. Of course, it is not intended that every one of our young men should be an authority on his religion; but it is essential that he should have at least a general idea of his religious lore, were it only to keep him safe from unscrupulous missionaries. Sri Sarma's book is bound to be eminently useful in imparting this long-neglected knowledge. We heartily commend this neat little book to the consideration of our college authorities, though we are sure that many of our "educated" grown-ups too will certainly benefit by a perusal of it.

S. Vaidyanathan.

Facets of Modern English Poetry. By Prof. V. N. Bhushan. Published by the Manager, The Mahratta, Poona. Price As. 4.

This booklet of 54 pages contains six essays on some aspects of Modern English Poetry. The term 'modern poetry' is first explained and then follow essays on the present attitude to Nature, present poetic ideology, War poetry etc. The articles are thoughtful and bespeak the author's wide reading on the subject. We only wish the book was better printed and got up.

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An Anglo-Vernacular Manuscript Magazine on Library Service. Edited by D. Krishnayya, Supervisor, Municipal Library, Hindupur.

We have pleasure in noting this enterprise. It contains useful articles on library service in English and Telugu. Sjt. Krishnayya has already impressed us with his untiring industry. We wish him success in this finely useful enterprise.

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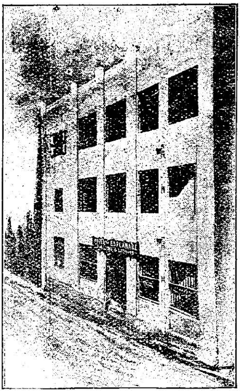

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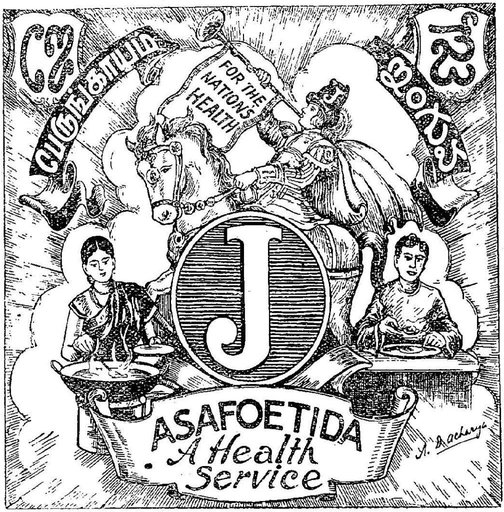

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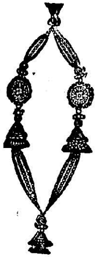

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